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Reduce, Reuse, Recycle (Part 2)



Last month we looked at how we could reduce the environmental impact of our technology usage. This month we continue the theme, with suggestions on components that can be re-used or recycled.

Re-use ..

... **your current technology:** If your computer has slowed down, think about your options before you throw it out the door and rush to buy a new one.

Off to the mechanic: A software 'tune-up' may help to improve your computer's performance. Your local Computer Troubleshooter can remove unnecessary temporary files and fine tune settings to help your computer run more efficiently.

Bits and pieces: You may be able to upgrade some of the individual components inside your computer, instead of needing to purchase a new, complete system. Extra memory (RAM) or a faster processor may make a significant difference and be cheaper on your wallet.

Software versus hardware: Software like Microsoft's "Terminal Services" may allow you to run newer, more intense software programs on older computers, without needing to upgrade them. There are some considerations to this (for example, you will need a Server computer) but it could be worthwhile if you have a significant number of older desktop computers.

One person's trash: Who else can use your old technology? If you have to replace your hardware to keep up with the latest version of your business software, it might be perfectly suitable for a student who wants to write documents and browse the internet. See if there are any groups in your area who clean up old computers and redistribute them to people who need them.

... **your paper:** How many more uses can you find for your waste paper before it ends up in a rubbish bin?

Pack it up: Shredded paper makes great packing material for items being posted or transported in an office move or house move.

Furry friends: Local pet shops can't get enough shredded paper to ensure a nice, clean stay for their animals.

Note the other side: If your printer can only print on one side, use the reverse, blank side of any unneeded documents to write your grocery list or provide drawing paper for your children. Cut a sheet up into 4 smaller squares and keep by your telephone for writing down any messages.

Recycle ..

... **your waste paper:** It is good business practice to shred any printed documents containing sensitive information (customer details, financial projections etc). But what happens to your shredded paper? Many companies now offer recycling services for paper and cardboard, if it's not already part of your standard local waste collection.

... **old computer hardware:** Before it becomes destined for land fill, see if anyone in your area offers recycling or safe disposal of computer parts.

... **ink and toner cartridges:** These components can leak dangerous chemicals and should be disposed of safely. Many recycling programs can separate the inks and plastics, sending the plastics on to be used in objects like road barriers and park benches.

Talk to your local Computer Troubleshooter about your options for reusing or recycling your computing technology.



**Contact your local Computer
Troubleshooters**

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